

REMARKS

I. Formal Matters

Claims 1-3, 7-22 and 24-26, 28 and 29 are all the claims pending in the present Application. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 1-3, 7-22, 24 and 25 have been allowed.

The Examiner has rejected claims 26, 28 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Biskeborn et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,883,770). The Examiner has also indicated that claim 27 contains allowable subject matter, and would be allowed if rewritten in independent form.

By this Amendment Applicant incorporates the subject matter of allowable claim 27 into independent claim 26. As such, Applicant respectfully asserts that claim 26 is now in condition for allowance. Claim 27 has been canceled.

With respect to claims 28 and 29, these claims depend from independent claim 26. As such Applicant respectfully asserts that these claims should be patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 26.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

This Amendment is being filed via the USPTO Electronic Filing System (EFS).

Applicant herewith petitions the Director of the USPTO to extend the time for reply to the above-identified Office Action for an appropriate length of time if necessary. Any fee due under 37 U.S.C. § 1.17(a) is being paid via the USPTO Electronic Filing System (EFS). The USPTO is also directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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